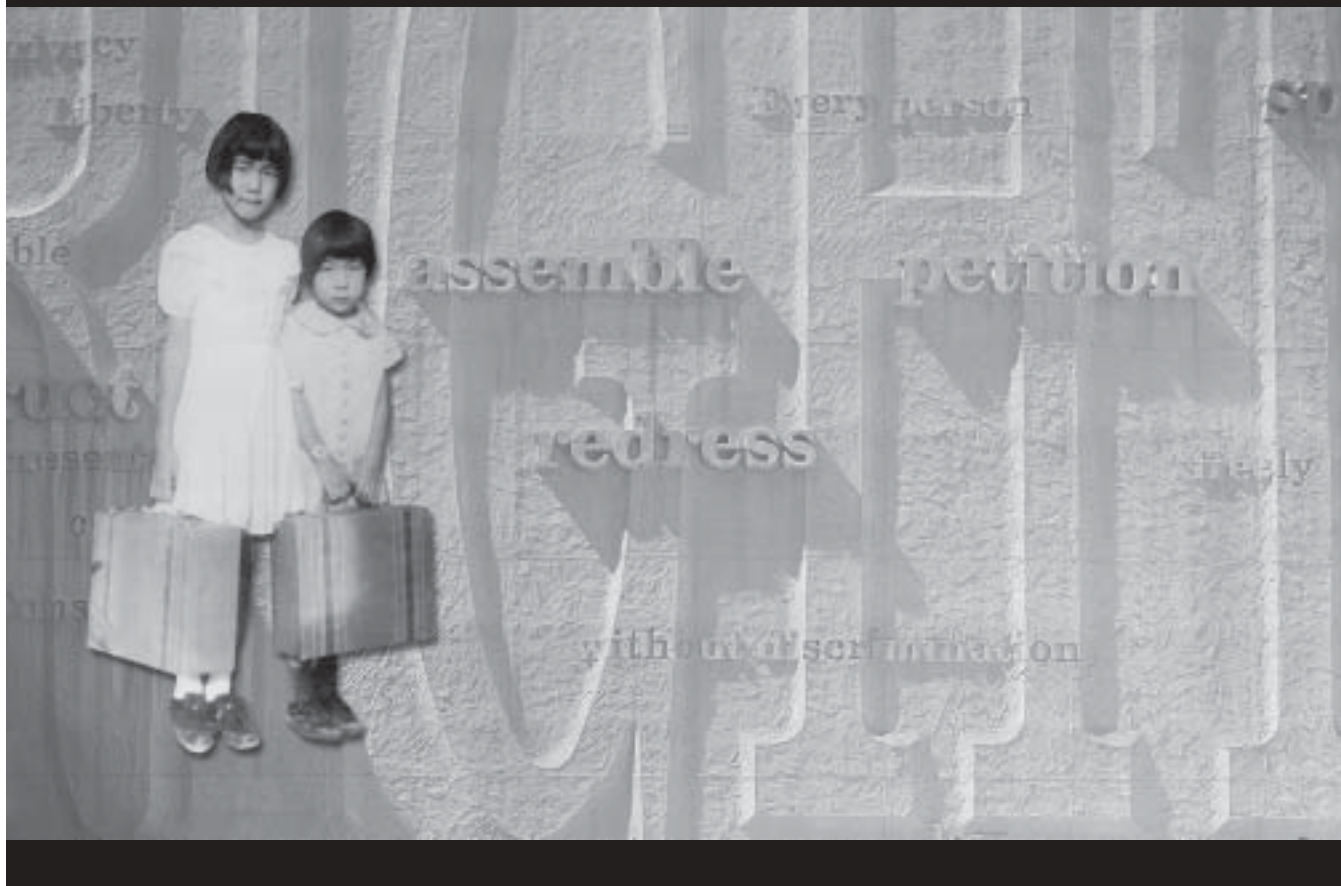


GOLDEN STATE MUSEUM

Time of Remembrance



Teacher Packet

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Presented by **Florin, Marysville, Placer, Sacramento, and Stockton chapters of the Japanese American Citizen's League, California State University Sacramento Archives and Special Collections, the Elk Grove Unified School District, and the Golden State Museum**

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INTRODUCTION

The tragedy of September 11th and the increase of hate crimes in the aftermath against innocent persons because of their ethnic identity demonstrates the importance of studying the experience of Japanese Americans. After Japan bombed Pearl Harbor, the U.S. interned 120,000 persons of Japanese ancestry, denying their basic civil rights. We cannot afford to repeat the mistakes of the past by allowing war hysteria and lack of understanding to deny anyone their basic rights guaranteed by the United States Constitution.

The mass imprisonment of persons with Japanese ancestry during World War II challenged the very foundation of our democratic society. The California State Board of Education in its Model Curriculum for Human Rights and Genocide stated that “there is no more urgent task for educators in the field of history and social science than to teach students about the importance of human rights” and that we must “acknowledge unflinchingly the instances in U.S. history when our own best ideals were betrayed by the systematic mistreatment of group members because of their race, religion, culture, language, gender or political views.” We are a strong nation of immigrants, and our ancestors come from many cultures.

5th and 6th Constitutional Amendments

No person shall be deprived of life, liberty, or property without due process of law. ... The accused shall enjoy the right to a speedy and public trial by an impartial jury and to be informed of the nature and cause of the accusation.

The purpose of this resource guide is to assist you in teaching your students about the internment of Japanese Americans in relation to our rights under the United States Constitution. The “Time of Remembrance” program and the exhibit, “The Japanese American Experience in California,” at the Golden State Museum will give you and your students an opportunity to hear first-hand stories from Japanese Americans who were in the internment camps. The Golden State Museum offers this program in partnership with the Florin, Marysville, Placer, Sacramento, and Stockton Japanese American Citizen’s League, California State University Sacramento Archives and Special Collections, and the Elk Grove Unified School District. We need to teach students that although the strongest protection for human rights is fundamental in our democratic nation, mistakes are made. It is the responsibility of citizens to challenge those in positions of power in the government and not allow unfair treatment or practices to continue. The significance of this study goes beyond the treatment of Japanese Americans. When the constitutional rights of one group of citizens are violated, all Americans are affected.

Marielle Tsukamoto
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HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

Many Americans find this event in American history difficult to understand in a democratic society embracing “liberty and justice for all.” This overview will attempt to explain how and what happened to persons of Japanese ancestry leading to internment until the completion of redress when President Reagan signed an apology in 1988.

Root Causes

The seeds of prejudice that resulted in the incarceration of Japanese Americans during World War II were sown nearly a century earlier when the first Asian immigrants arrived during the California gold rush. There was intense and often violent competition for control of the gold mines. About 25 percent of the miners in California immigrated from China. With no tolerance for further competition and using acts of terrorism, the white newcomers drove the Chinese out of the mining areas. After California became a state in 1850, violence against the Chinese became legal discrimination. Article 19 of the California Constitution authorized cities to expel or segregate Chinese persons and to restrict employment opportunities. Laws prohibited the Chinese from becoming citizens or voting, attending school with whites, marrying whites, and testifying in court against a white person. California laws required Chinese persons to pay a special tax, providing a major source of revenue for cities, counties, and the state.

Despite these circumstances, more Chinese immigrated to escape their poverty-stricken life in China. With the large influx of whites from the states and Europe, the proportion of Chinese in California dropped to 10% of the population.



Arrival of Japanese

As the Chinese population declined due to the lack of women and to many men returning to their homeland, a labor shortage developed. The agricultural industry looked to Japan as a new source of workers for menial labor at low wages. Under pressure from the United States to relax the ban on labor emigration, Japan allowed laborers to leave in 1884. The Issei, the first generation of Japanese immigrants, began working in the sugar cane fields of Hawaii and the vegetable and fruit farms in California. By 1900, the Japanese population increased in Hawaii and the mainland to about 90,000.

Since the major labor unions denied membership to workers of Asian ancestry, the Japanese farm workers formed independent unions, and the leaders aggressively negotiated for higher pay. Many Japanese Americans saved enough money to buy or lease farmland. The Japanese farmers developed much unwanted farmland into rich agricultural areas. As long as the Japanese remained docile, their hard work was welcomed. But as they showed signs of initiative, the Japanese were perceived as threats to white dominance. The anti-Japanese campaign began with mob assaults, arson, and expulsion from farming areas. Prejudices soon became institutionalized into law. As with the earlier Chinese, the Japanese were denied citizenship, forced to send their children to segregated schools, prohibited from certain occupations and from marrying whites. Some laws denied immigrant Japanese the right to own or lease agricultural land. The Asian Exclusion Act of 1924 prohibited Japanese from establishing permanent residency. Many considered this a national insult, since the United States had insisted upon Japanese immigration in the first place. The Japanese population did not significantly decrease like the Chinese population.



There was a sufficient number of Japanese women who married, resulting in the Nisei generation, or American-born persons of Japanese ancestry.

As the exclusionists intensified their efforts to get rid of the Japanese, a powerful new weapon, the mass media, enhanced their campaign. Newspa-

pers, radio, and motion pictures stereotyped persons of Japanese ancestry as unassimilable and untrustworthy. The media did not recognize the fact that many of them were citizens of the United States. Living in segregated neighborhoods and without access to media, the Japanese were unable to counteract false stereotypes.

Outbreak of War

The onset of World War II is difficult to pinpoint. During the depression of the 1930s, Germany and Japan became military powers, beginning conquests of neighboring nations. Conflicts broke out when Japan invaded China in 1937 and Germany invaded Poland in 1939. The United States was under tremendous pressure to enter the war. In July 1941, the United States, Britain and the Dutch East Indies (Indonesia) imposed an embargo on exports to Japan, effectively cutting off Japan's oil supply. The United States had broken Japan's top-secret code and was aware of the possibility of armed conflict.

In anticipation of war with Japan, the United States government undertook precautions to provide security for American civilians. Early in 1941, the State Department sent Curtis Munson to investigate the loyalty of Japanese Americans on the West Coast and Hawaii. The Munson Report stated that Japanese Americans citizens possessed an extraordinary degree of loyalty to the United States and

should not be considered a security risk. FBI and Naval Intelligence corroborated Munson's findings concerning the loyalty of Japanese Americans. The intelligence reports on the loyalty of Japanese Americans were known by high government officials, but kept secret from the public. Attorney General Francis Biddle and FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover both felt that the relocation of Japanese Americans was unnecessary and unconstitutional.

On December 7, 1941, Japan military forces attacked the U.S. military bases at Pearl Harbor. The United States declared war on Japan the following day. Within a few days after the declaration of war, the FBI began arresting over 2,000 persons of Japanese ancestry thought to be "suspicious" living throughout the United States and the territories of Alaska and Hawaii. Men considered community leaders were taken away without notice, leaving their families with no means for livelihood. In the absence of community leadership, inexperienced teenagers and young adults suddenly found themselves in the position of making decisions for the entire Japanese community. After a few weeks some were released, but most were secretly transported to one of the 26 relocation camps situated in remote areas of the U.S. The government never filed a single charge of sabotage, espionage or any other crime against the arrested Japanese Americans.



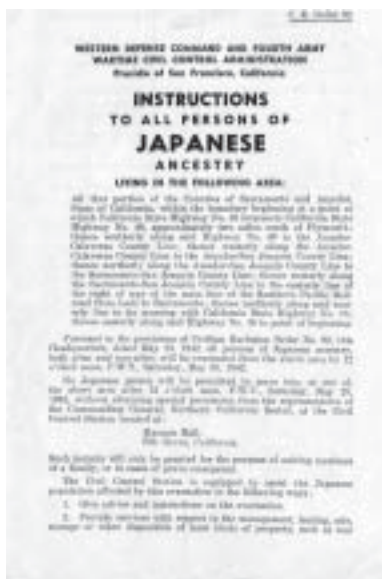
Executive Order 9066

Many people who are unfamiliar with the historical background have assumed that the attack on Hawaii was the cause, or justification, for the mass incarceration of

Japanese Americans on the West Coast. This assumption is inconsistent with the fact that the Japanese Americans living in Hawaii were not incarcerated en masse. Hawaii was 3,000 miles closer to Japan, in closer proximity to invasion and possible acts of sabotage. The Hawaiian military commander decided that "military necessity" required the Japanese Americans remain free to sustain the sugar cane fields in Hawaii. The history of prejudice and legal discrimination began nearly

100 years earlier in California. Economic interests in California were not satisfied with the arrests of individuals after the bombing of Pearl Harbor. They wanted the entire Japanese American population removed from California. Pressure groups and the media organized an intense campaign, publishing stories inflamed with “Yellow Peril” myths about spies and saboteurs. Radio, newspapers, movies and comic strips spread prejudice and stereotypes throughout the United States. The war became the perfect pretext for anti-Japanese groups to accomplish the goal they had been seeking for almost 50 years.

The California lobbyists pressured the federal government to remove and detain all Japanese Americans. Relying on the report of General John L. DeWitt, military commander of the Western Defense, Franklin D. Roosevelt eventually yielded to the West Coast pressure and signed Executive Order 9066 on February 19, 1942. Roosevelt signed the order despite the objections of Attorney General Francis Biddle and the FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover, who both felt the order was unnecessary and unconstitutional. Executive Order 9066 broadly authorized any commander to exclude any person from a designated area. Although the order did not mention any specific group, it was the understanding among high government officials that the authorization was for the purpose of removing and incarcerating Japanese Americans. General Dewitt issued a series of civilian exclusion orders to persons of Japanese ancestry living in California, parts of Arizona, Oregon, and Washington to evacuate to relocation camps. The justification for these actions on the West Coast was “military necessity,” which contradicted the military decision made in Hawaii. He masked the issue of citizen rights by using the term “non-alien” in reference to United States citizens on all of his written orders.



Evacuation and Relocation

Japanese Americans had to leave their homes with only items they could carry. Many times, families had three to five days to pack. During evacuation, the sales of homes, businesses, and possessions drove values down. Farms and businesses that had taken thirty and forty years to establish sold for less than 10 percent of their value. During the evacuation in May 1942, many farm families abandoned crops ready for harvest losing potential income. The evacuation order did not permit pets, so families had to find others to care for beloved pets. Trains, buses, and trucks transported families to temporary housing called assembly centers, located at county fairgrounds, racetracks, and live-stock exhibition halls. Some families were housed in hastily constructed barracks, while others were forced to live in horse stalls.

In June 1942, the U.S. Navy won a decisive victory and the tide of war shifted in favor of the United States. Japan was no longer militarily capable of attacking the West Coast and Hawaii. Although the threat of invasion had vanished, the U.S. government continued its plans to build ten permanent relocation or internment camps in interior desert and swamp regions. A total of about 120,000 persons of Japanese ancestry were ultimately relocated to internment camps that were surrounded by high barbed wire fences and guard towers manned by armed American soldiers. The soldiers, who had orders to shoot internees leaving without permission, wounded dozens and killed eight internees. In most cases, the shootings occurred when a confused elderly person got too close to the fence or when an internee tried to retrieve a child's toy or rescue an animal caught in the fence.

Barracks constructed of uncured lumber covered with tarpaper provided little protection from the



elements. Internees found themselves subjected to extreme heat in the summer and sub-freezing temperatures in the winter. Dirt, sand, and weeds found their way through the poorly constructed floors and walls. The walls separating the barrack apartments ended below the roof, allowing private family discussions to be heard from one apartment to another. The barrack apartments were generally 20' x 25' open rooms, with cots lined up next to each other and without any private area for changing clothes. Often, large extended families were crowded together in these one-room apartments. Internees without family were sometimes housed in barrack rooms with total strangers. A small potbelly stove provided the only heat, and a bare bulb hanging from the ceiling provided light. Internees stood in long lines at the mess hall in their block for meals at assigned times. Personal necessities, such as bathing or using the bathroom, required walking to an assigned latrine. The bathrooms often did not provide privacy. Internees had to bathe and use the latrines in open rooms without partitions.

Japanese Americans were known for their pride and dignity. Under the regulations of the internment camps, their family structure and self-esteem suffered. Fathers were no longer the breadwinners, families rarely ate meals together, and parents lost control of their children. It was difficult to provide parental influence and discussion of values to the children around the dinner table. The camp administration controlled mail and other forms of communication. The Japanese language was banned at public meetings, and the Buddhist and Shinto religions were suppressed. Another form of indignity was imposed on the internees in February 1943. After being incarcerated for almost a year, detainees 17 years of age and older were required to answer a questionnaire indicating their loyalty to the United

States and their willingness to serve in the U.S. armed forces. Insensitive wording that effectively asked them to renounce their Japanese citizenship caused confusion and fear among the internees, especially the elderly Issei. Prohibited from being U.S. citizens, the Issei would render themselves stateless. Despite the pain and anger that the questionnaire generated, the majority of the internees answered the questions concerning loyalty to the United States in the affirmative.

As the days in camp stretched into months, Japanese Americans went to work to make camp life more tolerable. Men gathered scrap lumber to make furniture. Parents demanded schools for the children. The internees cultivated crops on barren land. Their fresh produce greatly improved the quality of food available at the mess hall. Former farmers now imprisoned in internment camps were called upon to help solve the farm labor shortage and volunteered to help civilians plant and harvest their crops. The internees planted trees and shrubs, constructed small Japanese gardens, and built baseball diamonds and basketball courts. Friday night movies and talent shows provided entertainment. Remarkable art forms flourished in the camps. The Amache internment camp was known for its talented silk screeners. Many camps had art studios where internees painted oils and watercolors documenting camp life. Women created beautiful pins, corsages and curio boxes from shells collected from former lake beds at Tule Lake and Topaz internment camps. Some women created beautiful dolls from scraps and kimono fabric. Women also made vases and baskets from wire and crepe paper.

THE WRA RELOCATION CAMPS, 1942-1946



Other internees used their time to write essays and poetry. Camp life often dominated the theme of the writer's work. Many essays written by children and young people focused on democracy and love of country.

Military Service

When the United States entered World War II, there were 5,000 Japanese Americans in the U.S. armed forces. Many of them were discharged, being classified as "enemy aliens" even though they were U.S. citizens. In Hawaii, a battalion of Nisei volunteers formed the 100th Infantry Battalion in May 1942. After facing fierce combat in northern Africa and Italy, they became known as the "Purple Heart Battalion" due to their high casualty rate. The United States soon discovered the need for Japanese language specialists and recruited men and women of Japanese ancestry for Military Intelligence Service (MIS) in June 1942. The crucial military intelligence gathered by Japanese American soldiers helped to shorten the war in the Pacific.

By 1943, the United States needed more soldiers and announced the formation of the 442nd Regimental Combat Team, made up of Nisei volunteers from Hawaii and the mainland. The following year, the 442nd joined forces with the 100th Infantry Battalion in Europe. Due to the success of the Nisei in combat, the U.S. reinstated the draft to include Nisei in detention camps to add to the ranks of the 442nd. Some 33,000 Japanese Americans served in the armed forces during World War II while their families were still incarcerated behind barbed wire fences.

The Nisei fought bravely and many died in combat.



Injured soldiers returned to battle after their wounds healed. Due to outstanding bravery and heavy combat duty, the 100th/442nd Regiment Combat Team became the most-decorated battalion, earning more medals of honor than any other unit of comparable size and length of duty in U.S. military history. The Nisei fought bravely in part to convince the U.S. government that they were loyal American citizens. They hoped their brave deeds would earn freedom for their families and the other Japanese Americans.

Returning Home

After the United States dropped atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Japan surrendered on August 14, 1945, marking the end of World War II. Some internees celebrated the end of the war and anticipated the day they would return home. Others were ambivalent about returning home. Japanese Americans worried about how their neighbors and communities would receive them. Many had lost their homes and businesses, and others, upon returning, found their homes and farms occupied by tenants unwilling to leave. Many Japanese Americans found that their belongings placed in church basements and government storage facilities before internment had been vandalized or stolen. The return of Japanese Americans to their homes in California, Oregon, and Washington was marked by acts of violence by pressure groups who wanted to keep out the Japanese Americans permanently. Some West Coast restaurants and businesses refused service to Japanese Americans, even soldiers in uniform. More acts of violence and terrorism were committed against Japanese Americans at the end of the war than at the beginning.

Reconstructing their lives after WWII was difficult for Japanese Americans. The Issei were too old to start up their businesses and farms again. The young Nisei generation had their education disrupted and could no longer afford to go to college because family support became their responsibility. Losses were compounded by long-lasting psychological damages. Prison-like conditions disintegrated the family structure. Many extended families broke up, settling in separate areas of the United States where

they could find jobs. As they had done in the internment camps, Japanese Americans did what they could to make the most of a terrible situation. Men started small gardening businesses and women found work in canneries. Japanese Americans did their best to reestablish themselves as good and hardworking Americans. Parents soon found that their children faced the lifelong stigma of having their birth certificates and school records indicate that they spent their childhood in captivity. Japanese Americans suffered the greatest indignity of being falsely imprisoned by their own government.



Redress

Initiated by pressure groups on the West Coast and executed by the highest levels of government, this extraordinary episode in the history of the United States is a demonstration of how the system of checks and balances can fail. President Gerald R. Ford rescinded Executive Order 9066 on February 19, 1976, exactly 34 years after it was signed by President Roosevelt. After a decade of pressure from various Japanese American groups for monetary reparation, Congress passed an act in 1980 creating a Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians. President Carter signed the act that same year. The Commission found that there was no military necessity justifying the evacuation and internment of Japanese Americans from the West Coast. The Commission further concluded that the evacuation and internment was the result of “race prejudice, war hysteria, and a failure of political leadership.” These findings became the basis for redress bills introduced in both houses of

Congress. On September 17, 1987, as a result of the efforts of many Japanese American organizations, the House of Representatives passed HR442, the Civil Liberties Act, by a vote of 243 to 141. The Senate passed a similar measure. President Reagan signed HR442 into law on August 10, 1988, authorizing payment and an apology letter to each surviving internee. On October 9, 1991, the United States government began issuing a letter of formal apology and a check of \$20,000 to each internment survivor, almost 50 years after incarceration.

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Photos from CSU Special Collections & University Archives unless otherwise noted. Cover: Mariko & Reiko Nagumo prepared for internment (background: Constitution Wall at the Golden State Museum). Table of Contents: Tule Lake, California. Pg 2: Misao & Asataro Nakano in Hawaii, ca. 1904; Unidentified Japanese picture bride (National Archives). Pg 3: Mary [Dakuzaku] Tsukamoto and siblings, ca. 1930; Honolulu Star-Bulletin. Pg 4: Civilian Exclusion No. 92; ID tag worn by Masami Iwasa during relocation. Pg 5: Departure Day (California State Archives). Pg 6: Nisei troops. Pg 7: Issei Citizenship group, 1954. Pg 8: Florin School (segregated) graduating class, 1931. Pg 9: Letter of apology signed by President George Bush. Pg 10: calligraphy translation “Time of Remembrance.” Pg 11: Amache Relocation Center. Pg 12: Departure Day (California State Archives). Pg 13: Fresno Assembly Center baseball champions, 1942; Mariko & Reiko Nagumo prepared for internment. Pg 14: Poston Relocation Center. Pg 15: Misa Kashiwagi. Pg 16: Internees with flag at Amache Relocation Center.

U.S. HISTORICAL DATES

1869 First group of Japanese immigrants arrives in the U.S. and establishes a community at Gold Hill (Coloma) in California.

1882 Congress passes Chinese Exclusion Act, prohibiting further Chinese immigration and barring Chinese from citizenship. Enforced from 1882-1892, this act created a labor demand and is considered a major reason for increased immigration of Japanese to the Pacific Coast.

1898 The U.S. annexes Hawaii, enabling about 60,000 Japanese residing in Hawaii to proceed to the mainland without passports.

1890 Under pressure from the U.S., the Japanese government stops issuing passports to laborers desiring to enter the U.S. Since the territory of Hawaii is not mentioned, Japanese continue to immigrate to Hawaii.

1905 San Francisco labor leaders form the Asiatic Exclusion League, demanding the halt of Japanese immigration. The *San Francisco Chronicle* runs anti-Japanese series for a year and a half. California legislators urge Congress to limit Japanese immigration.

1906 San Francisco School Board passes a resolution to send all Chinese, Japanese and Koreans to segregated schools.



1907 Congress passes an immigration bill forbidding Japanese laborers from entering the U.S. via Hawaii, Mexico, and Canada. President Theodore Roosevelt orders the San Francisco School Board to rescind the segregation order. Strong feelings against Japanese persist and anti-Japanese riots break out in San Francisco.

1908 The Secretary of State and the Foreign Minister from Japan formalize the Gentleman's Agreement. Japan stops issuing passports for Japanese laborers to the U.S. In return, President Theodore Roosevelt persuades the San Francisco School Board to permit school integration.

1912 Japanese Americans own 12,726 acres of farmland in California.

1913 Alien Land Law passes that denies "all aliens ineligible for citizenship," including all Asians except Filipinos the right to own land in California. Leasing land was limited to 3 years.

1918 California's Alien Land Law closes loopholes and forbids Issei to buy land in the names of their Nisei children.

1920 California's Alien Land Law prohibits the leasing of land to "aliens ineligible for citizenship."

1921 Under pressure from the U.S., Japan ceases issuing passports to picture brides, who had been immigrating to the U.S. from around 1910 to join husbands married by proxy.

1922 In *Ozawa vs. the U.S.*, the Supreme Court reaffirms that Asian immigrants are not eligible for naturalization.

1924 Congress passes Immigration Exclusion Act, barring all immigration from Japan.

1937 Japan invades China. U.S. breaks off commercial relations with Japan.

1939 Germany invades Poland.

Britain and France declare war on Germany, marking the beginning of World War II.

1940 Japan seizes military bases in Indochina.

1941

July: U.S. government imposes oil embargo on Japan and freezes Japanese assets in the U.S.

November 7: Curtis Munson reports to the President, State Department, and Secretary of War that the Japanese Americans possess an extraordinary degree of loyalty, corroborated by years of surveillance by the FBI and Naval Intelligence.

December 7: Japan bombs the U.S. military base and fleet at Pearl Harbor.

December 8: U.S. Congress declares war on Japan. Within hours, the FBI begins arresting hundreds of Japanese community leaders in Hawaii and the mainland as potential security risks.

December 11: U.S. declares war on Germany and Italy. Arrests continue of over 2,000 Issei, including priests, teachers, newspaper editors, and other prominent leaders in the Japanese community.

1942

February 19: President Roosevelt signs Executive Order 9066, giving the Secretary of War authority to exclude certain people from designated "military areas."

March 24: General DeWitt issues the first of a series of exclusion orders, which would force the removal of all persons of Japanese ancestry on the West Coast.

June 5: The evacuation of all persons of Japanese ancestry from designated military areas is complete.

October 30: The U.S. army completes the transfer of all detained Japanese Americans to ten permanent War Relocation Authority (WRA) detention camps.

1943

January 28: The War Department announces plans to organize an all-Japanese American combat unit.

February 8: The U.S. government administers a loyalty questionnaire to men and women over the age of seventeen in the ten internment camps.

April: The U.S. War Department activates the 442nd Regimental Combat Team.

July 15: Tule Lake, California, is designated as a segregated camp for those who responded unacceptably to authorities on the loyalty questionnaire.

1944

January 20: The U.S. reinstates the draft of Japanese Americans.

October 30: The 100th/442nd all-Japanese American combat teams rescue the Texas "lost battalion" after five days of intense battle. They incur 800 casualties to rescue 211 Texans.

1945

August 6: U.S. drops atomic bomb on Hiroshima.

August 9: U.S. drops atomic bomb on Nagasaki.

September 2: Japan officially surrenders.

September 4: Western Defense Command revokes all West Coast exclusion orders against persons of Japanese ancestry.

1976 President Gerald Ford signs the proclamation rescinding Executive Order 9066.

1980 President Jimmy Carter signs a bill to create the Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians (CWRIC) to determine whether any wrongs had been committed in the internment of 120,000 Japanese Americans.

1983 The CWRIC issues its report concluding that the exclusion, expulsion and incarceration of Japanese Americans was not justified by "military necessity." The action was based on "race prejudice, war hysteria and failure of political leadership."

1984 California State Legislature proclaims February 19 of each year as "A Day of Remembrance." (President Roosevelt signed Executive Order 9066 on February 19, 1942.)

1988 On August 10, President Ronald Reagan signs the Civil Liberties Act of 1988, requiring payment of \$20,000 and a letter of apology to an estimated 60,000 survivors of internment.

1990 President George Bush signs the first letters of apology presented to the oldest internee survivors at a Department of Justice ceremony.

